

Routes4U

Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the Adriatic-Ionian, Alpine, Baltic Sea and Danube macro-regions



BACKGROUND DOCUMENT – STEERING COMMITTEE – 2 JULY 2019

Routes4U Project

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EUROPEAN UNION

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION



ABOUT ROUTES4U

Routes4U has been launched as a joint programme between the Council of Europe (Directorate General of Democracy – EPA on Cultural Routes) and the European Union (European Commission – DG REGIO).

The 30-Month programme (2017-20) enhances macro-regional development through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in line with the objectives of the

EU macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region.

ROUTES4U OBJECTIVES

Routes4U contributes to the cultural, social and economic development in the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region. It creates synergies between the EU macro-regional strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region and the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Routes4U contributes to activities on the protection of cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural tourism in the four macro-regions.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Through the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe, it contributes to sustainable cultural tourism. By doing so, it reinforces regional development in remote destinations.



CULTURAL COOPERATION

It strengthens the transnational cultural cooperation in the macro-regions, including different actors from macro-regional strategies and the Cultural Routes.



SOCIAL COHESION

In line with the Faro Convention, Routes4U involves local communities. They are essential for the cultural identity of the macro-regions.



CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Over 30 networks certified "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" provide a wealth of leisure and educational activities for all citizens across Europe and beyond. They cover a range of different themes, such as architecture, cultural landscape, gastronomy or major figures of European art, music and literature.

Through its programme, the Council of Europe offers a model for transnational cultural and tourism management and allows synergies between national, regional and local authorities and a wide range of associations and socio-economic actors. The networks crossed more than 50 countries in Europe and beyond and federate over 1600 members working towards the Cultural democracy and diversity but also mutual understanding and exchanges across boundaries.

The development of a Cultural Route requests the following steps:

- 1. Defining a theme that is representative for European values and common to several countries of Europe;**
- 2. Identifying heritage elements, that can involve tangible and intangible elements;**
- 3. Creating a European network with legal status of at least three European countries;**
- 4. Coordinating common activities in the main field of activities:**
 - Co-operation in Research and Development
 - Enhancement of Memory, History and European Heritage
 - Cultural and Educational Exchanges for Young Europeans
 - Contemporary Cultural and Artistic Practice
 - Cultural Tourism and Sustainable Cultural Development
- 5. Creating common visibility to ensure recognisability and coherence of the route across Europe.**

Economic impact of Cultural Routes

Cultural Routes are tourism networks that contribute to the economic development in the regions they cross. In Europe, tourism is the third largest socioeconomic activity. The direct impact of tourism on the GDP accounts to 10%, 12% of total employment is linked to tourism services¹. Culture contributes to the attractiveness of tourism destination. Cultural Routes provide cultural tourism offers that:

1. Do not focus on major heritage sites but on **remote and/or rural areas**;
2. Invite travellers to discover diverse cultural themes, thus **covering a broad range of distinctive, cultural offers**;
3. Implement different fields of actions **offering a variety of cultural experiences to tourists**;
4. Offer a platform for **cooperation and synergies between cultural, tourism and economic stakeholders** due to their structural organisation.

Sustainability of Cultural Routes

Each proposal for the certification of a new Cultural Route must ensure that the project is financially and organisationally viable. All certified Cultural Routes are legal entities in form of an association or a federation with members. In line with the objectives of the Council of Europe to strengthen democracy, certified Cultural Routes are democratic networks that work in a participatory manner. Due to this structure, **Cultural Routes have been proven to be sustainable. Cultural Routes members can furthermore ensure financial sustainability, e.g. through their membership fee. Cultural Routes have proven to be successful in project applications** (since 2017, on-going projects through e.g. EC Culture Program, LEADER, Creative Europe, Interreg amount to 16 000 000 Euros).

Protection of heritage

As landscapes, Cultural Routes combine the tangible and intangible heritage because they do not only safeguard cultural and natural sites, but also the living intangible expressions such as traditions, performing arts and traditional knowledge related to the specific Cultural Route. They contribute to the protection of this intangible heritage for future generations.

Transnational networks

Cultural Routes are transnational cultural networks with members of at least three countries in Europe that implement joint activities. These networks have proven to be successful tools for capacity-building: Members of a Cultural Route create synergies, exchange practices and knowledge on management practices. Members with fewer capacities can thus profit of the network and implement joint activities that they would not have been able to carry out alone.

¹ European Parliament: Report on Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe, (2010/2206(INI), 13 July 2011. Accessed 25 July 2018 at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2011-0265+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>.

Participatory approach

Especially in the field of heritage management, a participatory approach is essential, given the perception of heritage as a common property and given the relevance of local and regional communities in bringing this heritage to life. **Cultural Routes generally offer an entry point for the interaction with local people during the whole journey.** The stay element of Cultural Routes seeks to maximise the benefits for local communities and to encourage visitors to experience local culture rather than just passing through it.

EU MACRO-REGIONAL STRATEGIES EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR AND EUSDR

"A European Union (EU) macro-regional strategy is a policy framework which allows countries located in the same region to jointly tackle and find solutions to problems or to better use the potential they have in common". *What is an EU macro-regional strategy?*, European Union, 2017

Currently, four EU macro-regional strategies have been adopted: the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (2009), the Danube Region (2010), the Adriatic and Ionian Region (2014) and the Alpine Region (2015). Often referred to as EU macro-regions, they encompass 27 countries with more than 340 million people.



Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR)

Countries involved: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy (Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Emilia Romagna, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Sicily, Trentino, Umbria and Veneto), Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia.

4 main objectives: "Marine and Maritime Growth/Blue Growth", "Connecting the Region", "Environmental quality" and "Sustainable Tourism".



Alpine region (EUSALP)

Countries involved: Austria, France (Franche-Comté, Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur and Rhône-Alpes), Germany (Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria), Italy (Bozen, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Lombardy, Piedmont, Trento, Valle d'Aosta and Veneto), Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland.

3 main objectives: "Fair access to job opportunities / Building on the region's high competitiveness", "Sustainable internal and external / Accessibility for all" and "A more inclusive environmental framework for all / Renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future".



Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR)

Countries involved: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany (Berlin, Brandenburg, Hamburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein), Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden.

3 main objectives: "Save the sea", "Connect the region" and "Increase prosperity".



Danube region (EUSDR)

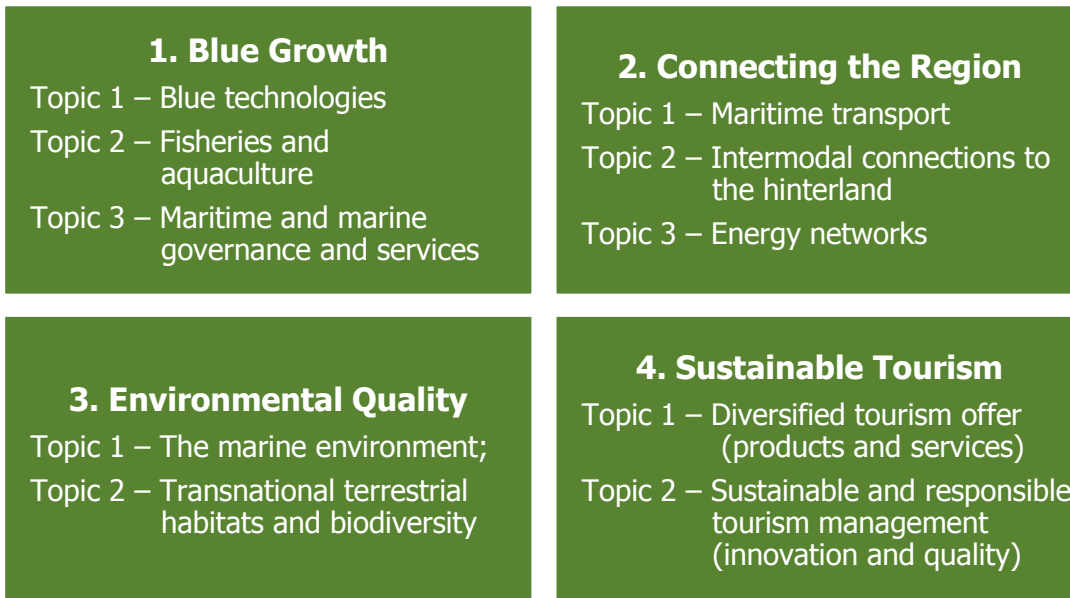
Countries involved: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany (Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria), Hungary, Moldova, Montenegro, Ukraine (Odessa, Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk and Zakarpattia), Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Romania.

4 main objectives: "Connecting the region", "Protecting the environment", "Building prosperity" and "Strengthening the region".

Adriatic and Ionian region (EUSAIR)

In 2012, following the decision taken by the Foreign Ministers from the Adriatic and Ionian Region, the European Council requested the European Commission to present a new EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region (EUSAIR) before the end of 2014. As a consequence, and taking into account the experience from the Baltic Sea Region and the Danube Region, the Commission adopted a Communication and an Action Plan on the EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region in 2014. The same year, the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region (EUSAIR) was finally endorsed by the European Council.

Four pillars have been defined in the framework of EUSAIR:



EUSAIR has determined sustainable tourism as one of its central pillars. Its specific objectives are the diversification of tourism offer to address the seasonality of inland, coastal and maritime tourism and the improvement of the quality as well as the creation of an innovative tourism offer that strengthen the sustainable development of the macro-region.

Alpine region (EUSALP)

The EU Strategy for the Alpine Region was launched in the form of a Communication and an Action Plan as a result of an extensive online public consultation conducted between July and October 2014 as well as

the conclusions of the closing high-level Stakeholder Conference in Milan on 1-2 December 2014 .On 27 November 2015, the Council of the European Union endorsed the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region. It is thus the “youngest” macro-regional strategy of the European Union.

Three interdependent thematic fields of actions have been identified:

Objective 1: Fair access to job opportunities, building on the high competitiveness of the Region

- Action 1 – To develop an effective research and innovation ecosystem
- Action 2 – To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors
- Action 3 – To improve the adequacy of labour market, education and training in these strategic sectors

Objective 2: Sustainable internal and external accessibility to all

- Action 4 – To promote inter-modality and interoperability in freight and passengers transport
- Action 5 – To connect people electronically and promote accessibility to public services

Objective 3: A more inclusive environmental framework for all and renewable and reliable energy solutions for the future

- Action 6 – To preserve and valorise natural resources, including water and cultural resources
- Action 7 – To develop ecological connectivity in the EUSALP territory
- Action 8 – To improve risk management and to better manage climate change including major natural risks prevention
- Action 9 – To make the territory a model region for energy efficiency and renewable energy

Culture and tourism are topics that are not addressed through a dedicated Action Group, but as sub-themes of existing Action Groups: Action Group 2: “To increase the economic potential of strategic sectors” and Action Group 6: “To preserve and valorise natural resources, including water and cultural resources” deal with topics related to Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Action Group 2 addresses as a thematic priority health Tourism (coordinated by the Region of Salzburg, AT). Action Group 6 aims at initiating activities for the promotion and marketing of sustainably produced food and forest products as a way to maintain cultural and ecosystem services.

Baltic Sea region (EUSBSR)

The Baltic Sea area was the first geographic area for which a macro-regional strategy was developed. In 2009, the Council of the European Union confirmed the creation of the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) to respond to common challenges by joining capacities, coordinating activities and creating synergies. The Strategy focuses on the question of how to improve the region’s competitiveness, create new transport and energy connections, protect the environment, promote knowledge-based cooperation and contacts, and ensure safety for people and for the environment.

The EUSBSR has three main goals:

1. Save the sea

- clear water in the sea
- rich and healthy wildlife
- clean and safe shipping
- better co-operation

2. Connect the region

- good transport conditions
- reliable energy markets
- connecting people in the region
- better co-operation in fighting cross-border crime

3. Increase prosperity

- the Baltic Sea Region as a frontrunner for deep-ening and fulfilling the single market
- contributing to the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy
- improved global competitiveness of the Baltic Sea Region
- climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management

EUSBSR actions are grouped within the above listed 13 Policy Areas of the Action Plan that was revised in March 2017. Two Policy Areas touch upon the area of sustainable cultural tourism and development of the Baltic Sea Region: Policy Area Tourism and Policy Area Culture are included under the overall goal to “increase prosperity”.

Danube region (EUSDR)

The Danube Region was the second macro-region for which a macro-regional strategy of the EU was developed. In June 2009, EU heads of state and government called on the European Commission to prepare a new strategy for the Danube Region. The EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR) was adopted in 2010 and endorsed by the Council in 2011.

EUSDR is based on four pillars, which have 12 priority areas to manage and co-ordinate:

Pillar 1: Connecting the region

- Improve mobility and intermodality of inland waterways, rail, road and air
- Encourage more sustainable energy
- Promote culture and tourism, people-to-people contacts

Pillar 2: Protecting the environment

- Restore and maintain water quality
- Manage environmental risks
- Preserve biodiversity, landscapes and air and soil quality

Pillar 3: Building prosperity

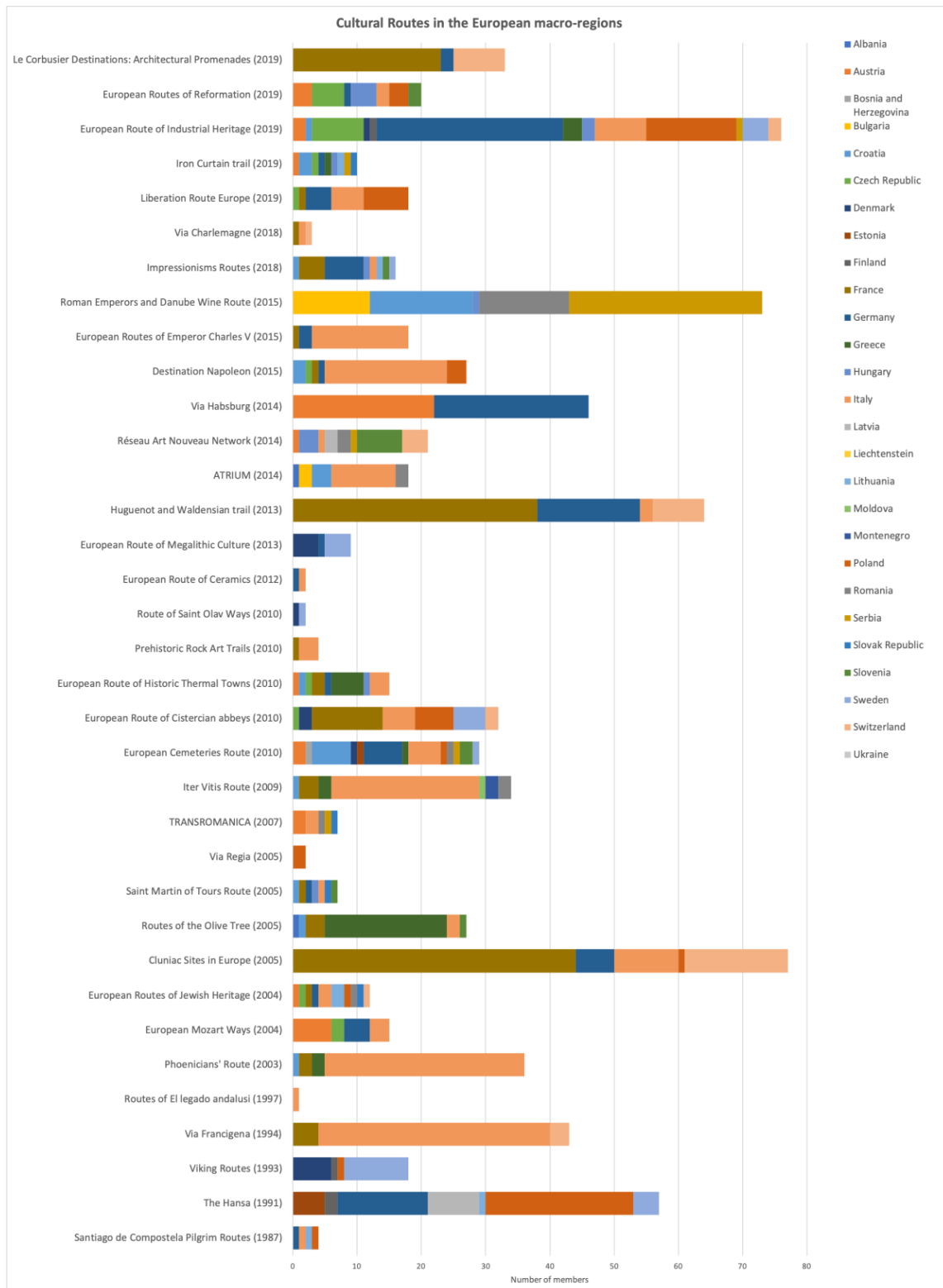
- Develop the Knowledge Society
- Support business competitiveness
- Invest in people and their skills

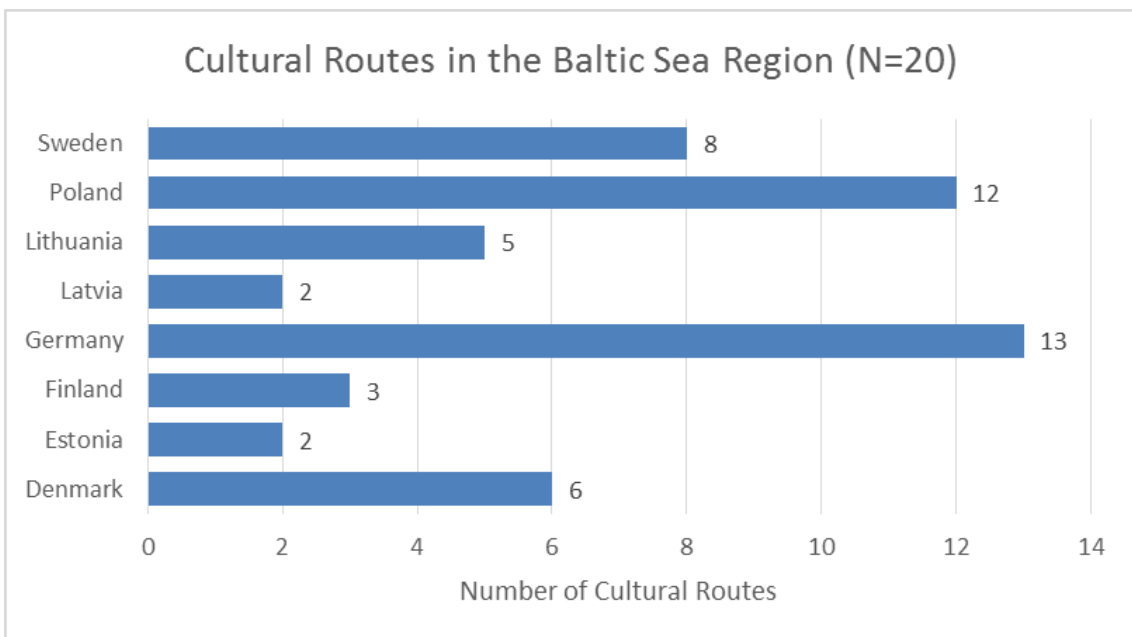
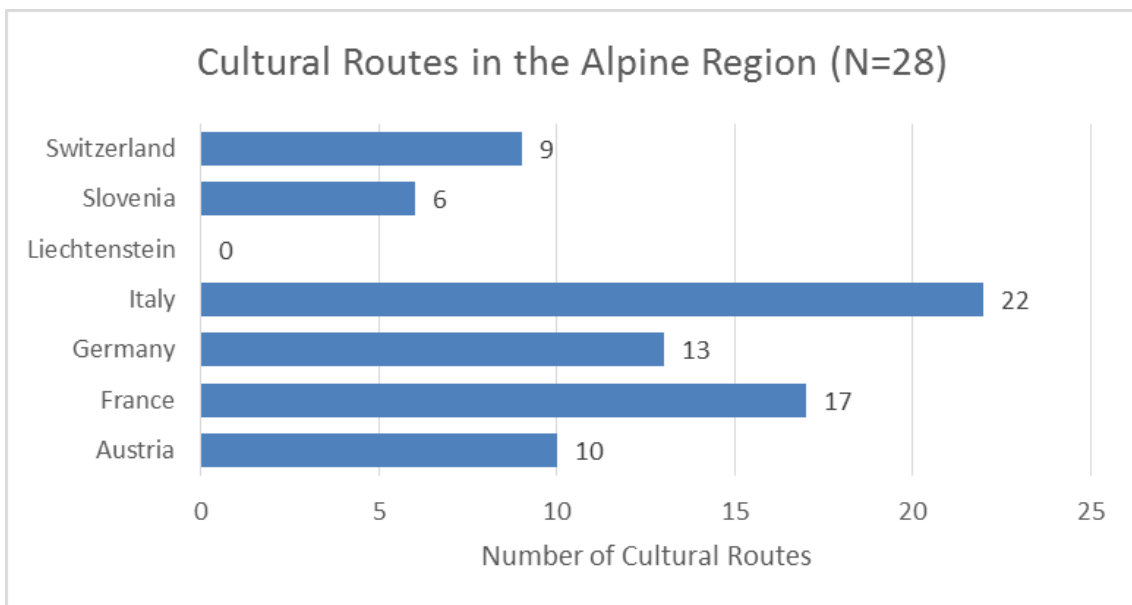
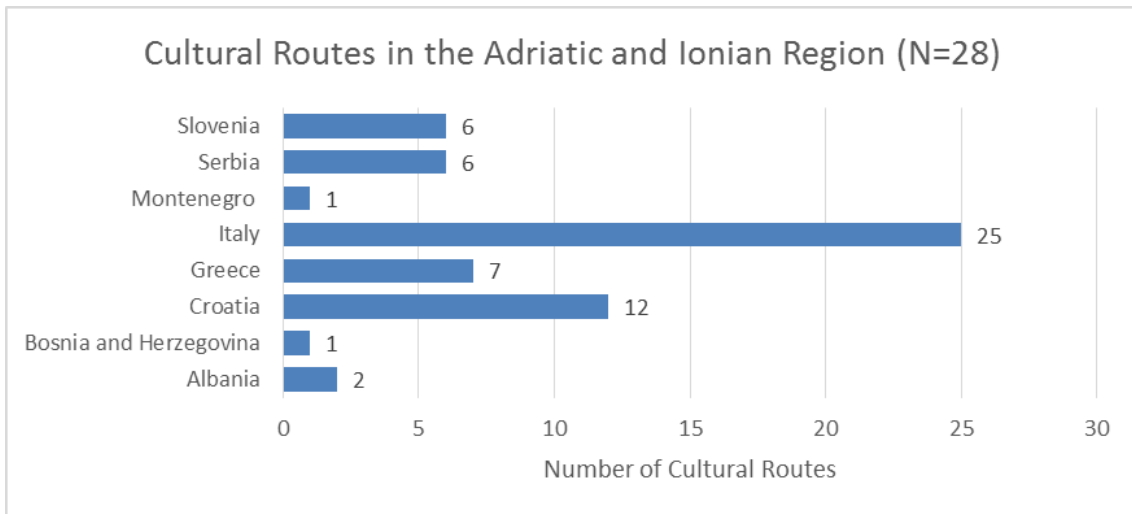
Pillar 4: Strengthening the region

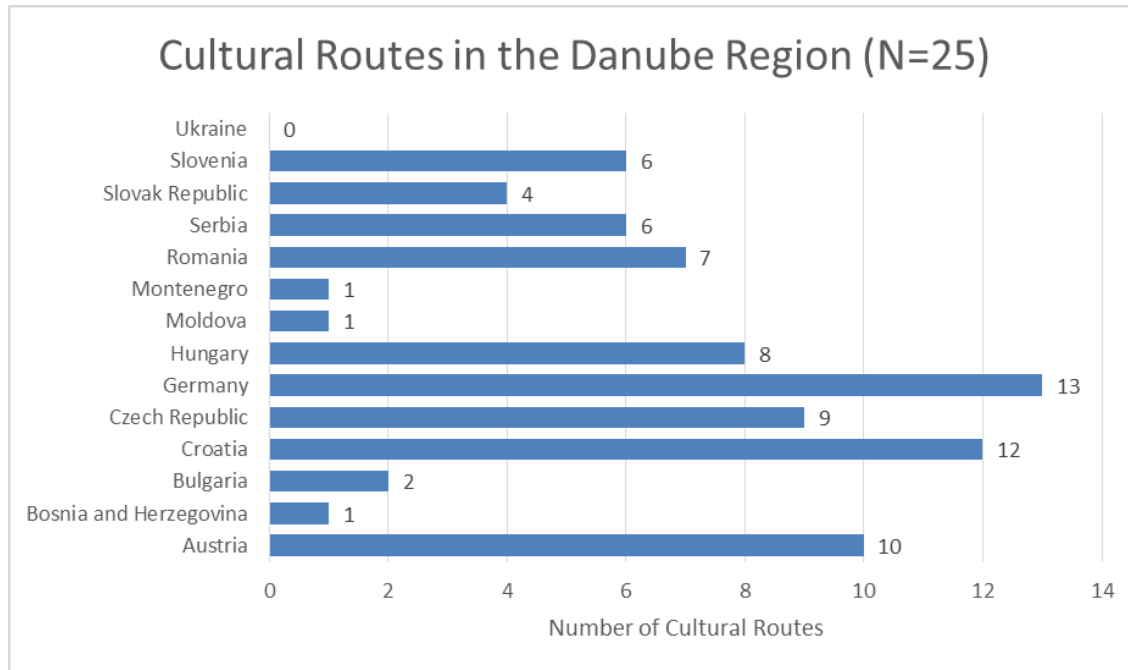
- Set up institutional capacity and co-operation
- Work together to tackle security and organised crime

The first Pillar of EUSDR “Connecting the region” contains Priority Area 3 on “Culture and tourism, people to people”. Seven targets have been set within the framework of Priority Area, among them the development and support of existing Cultural Routes relevant in the Danube Region.

CULTURAL ROUTES IN THE MACRO-REGIONS







MAIN FIELD OF ACTIONS

Sustainable cultural tourism and regional development

- **Cultural Routes trip planner** to discover Cultural Routes sites and organise a journey in the EU macro-regions.
- **Cultural Routes card** with discounts and advantages to invite travellers to discover the heritage of Cultural Routes in the macro-regions.
- Development of a **macro-regional brand** for EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR to be implemented through the Cultural Routes.



Capacity building

- **Trainings and e-learning modules** for Cultural Routes, regional and local authorities.
- Assistance to **cultural routes projects** identified in the EU macro-regions in view of the certification "Cultural Route of the Council of Europe" and for the **extension of certified Cultural Routes**.
- **Grant-System for exemplary actions** for Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe to implement activities in line with the macro-regional strategies EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR.
- **Compilation of data** on the economic impact of Cultural Routes, traveller behaviour and normative instruments on cultural tourism in the four macro-regions.



Good practices and guidelines

- **Identification of and exchange on practices and tools** on cultural tourism in use in the EU macro-regions.
- **Proposal of trans-sectorial guidelines** for the implementation of Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe.
- **Knowledge exchange** and information on best practices through the organisation of macro-regional workshops. This meeting will provide the opportunity to bring the relevant stakeholders of the Macro-regions into contact with the Cultural Routes.



DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES²

1. Strengthening existing Cultural Routes

A digital platform www.coe.int/routes4u was created. This platform contains information on the macro-regional strategies EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR as well as on the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe (CR), crossing the macro-regions.

Mapping

After having carried out a survey on CR-members in the macro-regions (types of members, geographical distribution), graphics on the membership of Cultural Routes were produced and put on the platform. Furthermore, a technical provider was hired to create a map on the Cultural Routes crossing the macro-regions. The map is organized according to clusters and thus provides an overview of the geographic distribution. The user can choose a specific area to see the detailed geographical location of Cultural Routes-members. The user can search for Cultural Routes using macro-regional filters or select specific Cultural Routes crossing the macro-regions. Information was shared with ESPON to integrate the data in their database. The data is also given for integration in the Platform POK of EUSALP.

Trip-planner

The trip-planner was created that displays touristic information related to the Cultural Routes crossing the macro-regions, blogger's reports on travelling along the Cultural Routes and pictures on the tourism places. It addresses an existing gap in the macro-regions: At present, different initiatives with information on the Cultural Routes can be found, nevertheless none of them with information at a macro-regional level. In order to promote destinations at a transnational, macro-regional level, information on the macro-regional tourism offers needs to be made accessible.

The trip-planner is launched for a testing period by tourism professionals (national tourism boards and tourist guides) until October 2019. On the basis of the findings of the testing period, further content will be added, and the trip-planner amended to be finalized by December 2019. The trip planner will then be promoted by tourism stakeholders such as national/local tourism offices and travel agencies in the macro-regions as well as by Cultural Routes.

Guidelines on funding and certification

An online guide on how to apply for EU-funding was developed to provide guidelines and tips on how to prepare a successful proposal and put on the Routes4U-webpage. Parallel to this, coop-

² According to the main fields of action as defined in the grant agreement.

eration with EuroAccess was initiated. The Routes4U webpage includes a webpage on EuroAccess with the EuroAccess-database on funding opportunities. On the other hand, the EuroAccess webpage includes a page on Routes4U.

Representatives of EuroAccess participated in a Routes4U-workshop (Bucharest) to provide advice on how to search for funding opportunities. Furthermore, an online-information session was organized on how to prepare a successful grant proposal. A representative of DG Regio provided information on the macro-regional strategies.

Certification guidelines were developed and disseminated online. These guidelines provide information on how to prepare a certification as a Cultural Route as well as on procedural questions concerning the certification cycle.

Best practices

A webpage of best practices was launched, providing information on best practices of activities of Cultural Routes and of the macro-regional strategies. This webpage provides an overview about activities in the framework of the macro-regional strategies and the Cultural Routes. Best practices are also presented in an audio-visual format through the Routes4U-voices series.

Cultural Routes Card

The Phoenicians' Route received a mini-grant to develop a Cultural Routes Card, "Smart Way card". This card will provide offers and discounts on newly developed tourism products and services in the Adriatic and Ionian Region. The development of the Cultural Routes Card will focus on hinterland economies through agreements with SMEs. The target traveller-group will be senior groups, disabled people as well as low income groups. The Cultural Routes Card will be implemented in close coordination with the findings and recommendations of the branding strategy for EUSAIR. Activities are funded through a Routes4U-mini-grant of 10 000 Euros. A similar action for EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR will take place in the second half of 2019.

Cooperation with the European Youth Card (EYC) was initiated to launch a joint Card in a selection of macro-regional countries, promoting the macro-regional strategies and the Cultural Routes. The Card should be developed by the end of 2019 and be launched with a broad campaign in 2020³.

Small grant-system

Four calls for proposal for EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR were prepared in coordination with DG Regio and published on 23 November 2018. A new Selection Committee was nominated. Information on the eligible proposals was given on a confidential note to the coordinators of the Thematic Steering Group 4 of EUSAIR, of Priority Area 3 of EUSDR, of Policy Area 6 of EUSBSR and of Action Group 6 and Action Group 2 of EUSALP for comments. These comments were discussed by the members of the Selection Committee.

A total of six proposals were chosen for the award of the grant in April 2019:

1. European Route of Jewish Heritage develops a Jewish Heritage-Incubator program for the EU strategy for the Danube Region for the extension of the CR and strengthening of the Jewish Heritage in the Danube Region. It includes research and inventory on national level

³ The campaign will follow the same principle of the campaign implemented by EYC and EU on the European parliamentary elections in 2019.

for the development of Jewish Heritage Routes in Austria, Slovenia, Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania.

2. The Hansa connects four countries of EUSBSR (Estonia, Latvia, Germany and Sweden) through history, culture and storytelling. Local food products will be developed to further develop meals covering countryside eating to fine dining in the cities “from farm to table”.
3. Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route increases regional investments in the tourism sector by extending the Cultural Route with new Roman archaeological sites from Slovenia and Austria and in support of local tourism businesses within the Danube Region. This will extend the touristic offer, expand existing itineraries and constitute the base to engage providers of tourism services with the Route.
4. Phoenicians' Route develops a Cultural Routes Card in line with the overall branding strategy for EUSAIR. The brand contributes to increase the competitiveness of the Cultural Route of the Council of Europe and to develop new tourism products and services.
5. Routes of the Olive Tree develops a touristic itinerary and an interactive map with new points of interests and extends the network in at least three countries of EUSAIR. It creates a brand name/logo in order to facilitate the visibility of the products and services linked to the Olive Tree and develop Info-Points to provide the local community with the relevant information about the Cultural Route.
6. Via Francigena develops signposting and information panels in the area of EUSALP as well as a Pilgrim passport by adding specific discounts and offers provided to the card holders for travelling along EUSALP. It creates tourist packages dedicated to the discovery of the Via Francigena within the Alpine Region.

Seven new calls for proposals for grants on the implementation of the branding strategy (Cultural Routes Card and creation of tourism products and services) were published in June 2019.

2. Developing and reinforcing cooperation

E-learning course

The first module of the Routes4U e-learning course provides a step-by-step guide on how to certify and manage a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe in the four macro-regions. It contains a section on the macro-regional strategies and their objectives. The course includes videos, check lists, info-graphics and various materials for further studying. Participants' learning progress is evaluated via exercises and assignments: they obtain a personalised certificate of attendance upon successful completion of the module's test.

The modules deal with the following topics:

Module 1.: Cultural Routes in the EU macro-regions. Step-by-step guidance on certification and implementation

Module 2.: Cultural tourism in the EU Macro-regions. Cultural Routes to increase attractiveness of remote destinations

Module 3.: Social participation and social cohesion in the EU Macro-regions. Cultural Routes and community engagement

Module 4.: Local and regional development in the EU Macro-regions. Cultural Routes and SMEs

Module 5.: Marketing strategies in the EU Macro-regions. Cultural Routes and marketing of the Macro-regional strategies

Manuals will be developed for each e-learning module to provide focused guidance to Cultural Routes managers, professionals working on the macro-regional strategies, cultural and tourism professionals as well as local and regional governments in the macro-regions. They aim to provide knowledge and assistance in the effective management of Cultural Routes that contribute to the objectives of the macro-regional strategies.

An expert prepared a database, compiling vocational and university training in the four macro-regions on themes related to sustainable tourism, transnational cooperation and protection of heritage. This database is available on the Routes4U-webpage and provides an overview about training possibilities in the four macro-regions.

Cultural Routes networks

A series of four macro-regional consultations for EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR was organized, bringing together professionals from the Cultural Routes and the macro-regional strategies.

- Consultation for EUSAIR in Venice, 6 June 2018
- Consultation for EUSBSR in Oslo, 6-7 September 2018
- Consultation for EUSDR in Bucharest, 6 November 2018
- Consultation for EUSALP in Bard, 2-3 April 2019
- Consultation for EUSBSR in Helsinki, 26-27 March 2019

The workshops were organized in cooperation with the coordinators of the Thematic Steering Group 4 of EUSAIR, of Priority Area 3 of EUSDR, of Policy Area 6 of EUSBSR and of Action Group 2 and 6 of EUSALP. More than 200 participants were trained on sustainable cultural tourism. Four roadmaps for EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR were developed and disseminated.

The discussion of the workshops was based on four feasibility studies for Cultural Routes in EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR, outlining the distribution of CRs and identifying geographical and thematic gaps.

Four macro-regional consultations were carried out to identify macro-regional priorities:

1. EUSAIR: Roman Heritage and Routes of the Olive Tree
2. EUSALP: Mountain heritage and Via Claudia Augusta
3. EUSBSR: Modern architecture/ Alvar Aalto and maritime heritage/ Ice Age
4. EUSDR: Iron Age and Cyril and Methodius Route

The priorities were further supported, for example:

- A study was launched on Roman heritage (December 2018 to February 2019) to prepare an inventory on the tangible and intangible heritage elements of a EUSAIR-CR on Roman heritage, involving all Ministries of Culture and Tourism of AIR-countries and identifying partners for the establishment of a legal network. For the purpose of this study, a Routes4U-survey on potential members was carried out. A stakeholders-meeting is planned in the second half of 2019 to discuss the establishment of a network of partners.

- A stakeholders meeting with potential new AIR-members was organized in Mali Losinji, November 2018. A consultation on the extension was organized during the annual forum in Goerlitz, September 2018. Another consultation was organised during the TSG-meeting in Podgorica, April 2019. Regular consultation with the CR took place. A mini-grant on the extension and strengthening of the CR was awarded.
- A study was launched on Cyril and Methodius Route on how to improve the geographical coverage of the Route. A consultation with the Cultural Route took place in Luxembourg in April 2019. A stakeholders meeting is planned in October 2019.
- Three studies on Iron Age, Ice Age, Via Alpina are launched to identify heritage elements and potential partners. On the basis of the findings of this study, a first stakeholders-meeting is planned in October 2019.
- A training-session for Cultural Routes project on the certification and management was organized in Visby, June 2019.

3. Innovating and supporting local economies

Branding

Studies on a branding strategy were launched for EUSAIR (January 2019), EUSDR (April 2019) and two experts were selected for EUSALP (recruited in May 2019) and EUSBSR (recruited in May 2019). These studies include, in a first phase, the research on data and information on macro-regional strategies and cultural tourism in the macro-region countries, as provided from national tourism board institutions as well as Cultural Routes crossing the respective macro-region. On the basis of the data collection, a brand strategy is developed, including the definition of a brand vision as well as of a brand identity and values. The marketing experts also develops action-oriented recommendations concerning the creation and promotion of the respective macro-regional brand, including recommendations on “Brand-personality” guidelines for the marketing material, distribution channels, communication channels, promotional slogans.

The branding study was presented during a B2B event in the framework of the Annual Forum of EUSAIR in Budva (April 2019) and a B2B event in the framework of the Annual Forum of EUSDR in Bucharest (June 2019).

A fam-trip on the Cultural Routes crossing the Baltic Sea Region was organized in June 2019. Three fam-trips in the other macro-regions will be organized in the second half of 2019, presenting the products and services linked to the Cultural Routes and the macro-regions. These fam-trips are organized for macro-regional tourism operators.

4. Tool for transborder policies and governance

Policies on cultural cooperation

Four experts prepare an analysis of the “state-of-the-art” of the Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe in the four macro-regions. The collection of data showcases the impacts of the Cultural Routes on local economies in the macro-regions (including job creation), in order to identify ways to further strengthen regional development and the objectives of the macro-regional strategies.

A questionnaire was circulated to the members of the macro-regional strategies to provide information on management and governance practices and tools, best practices and lessons learnt implemented by Cultural Routes in the respective macro-region in line with macro-regional objectives on regional development, sustainable tourism and protection of heritage. On the basis of this data, an atlas will be compiled on implementation and management of Cultural Routes at the local and regional level, addressed to local authorities.

The studies include assessments to identify needs, gaps and challenges with regard to strengthening the regional development through Cultural Routes, the development of guidelines for transnational and/or regional policies on cultural cooperation, sustainable tourism and economic development in the respective macro-region. The studies identify missing guidelines, policies and tools within the macro-regional strategies to make use of Cultural Routes as a driver for economic development.

Policies for signposting

An expert develops transnational guidelines for signposting through a series of guidelines interviews with those Cultural Routes that have successfully implemented signposting. The experts compile guidelines and recommendations as well as a collection of specifics for successful signposting.

5. Visibility and communication

Communication plan

A communication plan was developed and amended according to the needs of the target groups.

Webpage for grant and macro-regional strategies

A webpage on EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR was created (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/eu-macro-regions>). Logos of the European Union as well as EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR are displayed on this webpage. This webpage contains maps of all macro-regions, a list of the macro-regional objectives, factsheets for EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR and a promotional video on the macro-regional strategies. Hyperlinks lead the webpages of the macro-regional strategies.

A webpage on the mini-grants was created (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/funding>). It contains a description of the six awarded projects, listed according to macro-regions and guidelines how to apply for a grant. An extensive Question and Answer subpage provides further guidance on the grants. Hyperlinks lead to EuroAccess and EuroAccess news on new call for proposals and other funding opportunities are displayed.

Communication material

The Joint Programme is known under the title “Routes4U” to convey the idea of a Joint Programme for the people (“for you”). The title is accompanied by a visual identity that was chosen to transmit the idea of discovery of the Adriatic and Ionian, the Alpine, the Baltic Sea and the Danube Region through the Cultural Routes.

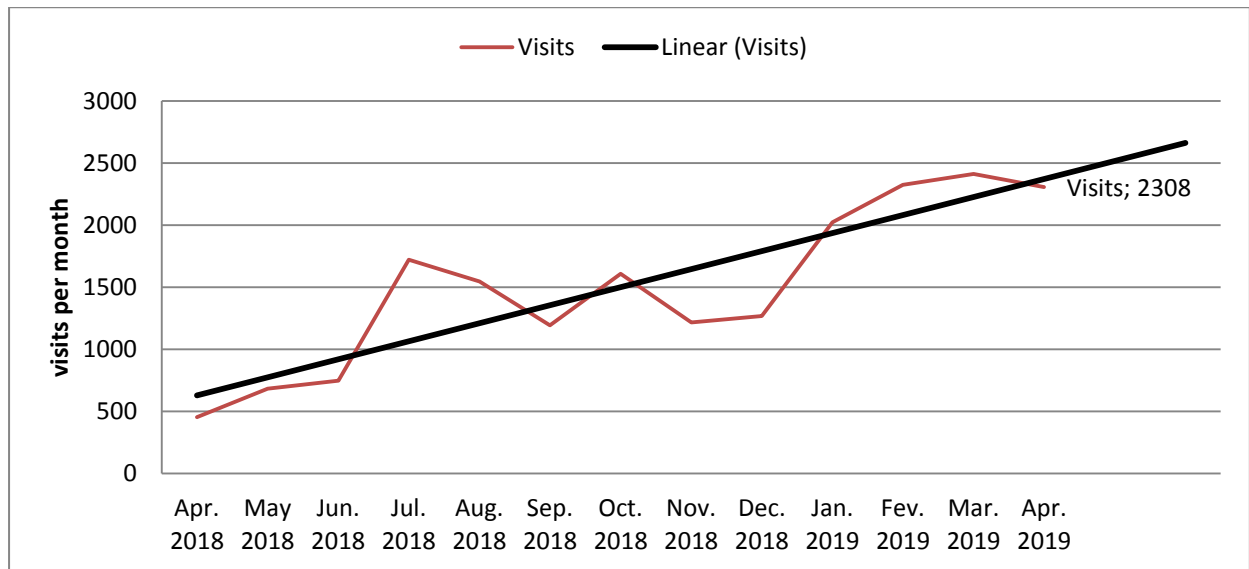
Content for the Routes4U-webpage (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/home>) is constantly added. So far, 30 pages with a multitude of information, data and guidelines exist.

A dedicated subpage on the macro-regional strategies EUSAIR, EUSALP, EUSBSR and EUSDR was developed and contains a hyperlink to the respective macro-regional webpages. A promotional video on the macro-regional strategies is included on the Routes4U-webpage. This webpage on the macro-regional strategies is the fourth most-visited webpage on the digital platform of Routes4U.

A specific section of the webpage contains databases that were created in the framework of the e-learning (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/databases>): One lists e-learning and university trainings and courses on sustainable tourism and heritage management. Another database contains data on Cultural Routes members in the four macro-regions as well as outside the macro-regions.

A specific webpage containing information on funding was created, that contains a link to the EuroAccess database on funding (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/-/euroaccess-the-eu-macro-regions-funding-database>).

The number of visitors to the webpage is continuously growing: Over one year, from April 2018 (453 users) to April 2019 (2308 users), traffic on the webpage increased by 409%.



Graph: number of monthly visits and trendline of the Routes4U webpage (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/home>)

Information on Routes4U is disseminated through a variety of channels, namely the webpages of the macro-regional strategies. News are published on the EUSAIR-webpages (<https://www.adriatic-ionian.eu>), EUSALP-webpages (<https://www.alpine-region.eu/>), EUSBSR-webpages (<https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/>, <https://www.balticsea-region-strategy.eu/increase-prosperity/pa-culture>) and EUSDR-webpages (<https://www.danube-region.eu/> and <https://www.danubecultureandtourism.eu/>)

Social media are used to promote Routes4U-activities:

- A weekly Routes4U-quiz is published every Friday on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/CultureRoutes/>). This quiz presents a specific destination that is part of a Cultural Route in the macro-regions.
- 30 Routes4U interviews and five Routes4U promotional event-videos were created and are displayed on the You-tube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfhoOy8XSBlwbSVKjdCvAmQ/>).
- The hashtag routes4U was created, linking to the twitter-account (<https://twitter.com/cultureroutes>).
- A Routes4U monthly newsletter was created (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/newsletter>).
- A special account on Instagram was created (<https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes-and-regional-development/home>) and displays pictures of the four macro-regions and the Cultural Routes.
- A photo competition was launched during the summer holidays (31 July 2018 to 30 September 2018) and four winners out of 87 photographers from 18 countries received an Interrail pass. Their pictures were also used for the Routes4U-publications.

Communication material with the joint logo of the European Commission and the Council of Europe were produced:

- Roll-ups with the logos of the macro-regional strategies.
- Posters promoting Routes4U-e-learning and Routes4U-trip-planner
- Leaflet on Routes4U
- Brochure with background information on Routes4U
- Promotional videos on five Routes4U-consultations
- Welcome kit (folders, pens and note-pad)



www.coe.int/routes4u

Routes4U Project

Funded
by the European Union
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Implemented
by the Council of Europe